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HACKNEY ARTICLE, BY THE PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN, FOR SUNDAY MAIL.

State Government plans for the redevelopment of Hackney North are designed to reverse the urban blight that afflicts this area as with many other city and inner city areas.

I think it is among the best urban renewal schemes yet produced in this country and that it will succeed in restoring Hackney as an integrated, attractive community.

Central to the replanning of the area has been our concern to consult with the present residents and to give the maximum possible opportunity for public discussion of the outline concept.

The whole of our present planning and development legislation is in fact designed to provide for this.

The need for redevelopment of Hackney North is obvious and stems from the decay of central city areas now affecting us and other States.

The seven key inner local government areas in the heart of Adelaide are all losing population.

Their overall population loss between the 1961 and 1971 censuses was 11.4% while at the same time the population of the total Adelaide urban area rose by about 28% and that of the State as a whole by 21%.

The Hackney North area has suffered particularly from this urban blight.

State Government is deeply concerned about this situation from a number of aspects.

It results in serious social problems. The extensive social capital facilities already provided - sewerage, electricity, gas, roads, bus services, shops, factories and offices, are not fully used. The flight to outer areas requires the extension of these public services at far greater marginal cost.

Provision of adequate public transport systems becomes increasingly difficult as this occurs and the spread to the

outer suburbs increased the pressure for multiple car ownership further worsening the drain on public expenditure, increasing road construction, congestion and air pollution.

If this trend is to be stemmed it is essential that the central city and inner suburbs be restored as attractive residential communities with a permanent population.

This is what we are seeking to do in Hackney.

The redevelopment scheme covers 14 acres at present containing 77 properties many of them substandard.

It is bounded on the west by Hackney Road, on the north by the River Torrens, on the east by Torrens Street and on the south by a proposed road along the line of Bertram Street extended through the northern tip of St. Peter's College grounds to Torrens Street.

Redevelopment will be undertaken by the South Australian Housing Trust and by private groups.

About nine acres are proposed for private development with the remaining five allocated to the Trust.

The private development proposed is a mixture of 270 terrace houses, patio houses and apartments in multi-storey blocks with a residential density of some 90 people to the acre.

The Housing Trust development comprises a variety of two and three storey flats, one and two storey terrace houses and one and two storey aged persons units with a residential density of about 45 persons per acre.

This scheme, therefore, provides homes for a community of about 1,000 people.

A highlight of the concept plan now put forward is the attention given to landscaping of the area to provide the maximum open space facilities associated with the River Torrens.

Some variation in the scheme will be inevitable when detailed submissions are considered by the State Planning Authority but it is anticipated that in its final form the plan will be in harmony with the concept now published.

The scheme has not been without its critics.

Much of this seems to assume that the Government should provide a redevelopment scheme entirely for low income families.

Examination of recent planning experience in the United States and Great Britain shows that such a policy would be socially disastrous and would establish a low income ghetto.

It is essential that any redevelopment project contain an adequate mix of ages and incomes.

The scheme has met with general approval from Hackney residents as have our compensation and relocation procedures.

We have received a large number of letters from former residents commending the proposed redevelopment and saying they were better off now having been relocated than they were living in Hackney.

While the plans were being formulated, the Housing Trust announced that it was a willing buyer of property in the area and a Trust official was given the specific responsibility of contacting and consulting with residents on an individual basis.

Residents are offered the choice of relocation elsewhere or priority in the allocation of homes on redevelopment.

The procedure we have adopted in relocation represented a breakthrough in compensation policy and has raised interest among housing authorities elsewhere in Australia.

In providing compensation and relocation the Trust considers not only the value of the property itself but the actual cost to the family affected in establishing a home elsewhere.

One other specific criticism is that redevelopment will not merely upgrade but will revalue it and price out the present residents.

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This is not the case.

Low cost housing (for pensioners at subsidised rates) within the scheme by the Trust ensure that present residents who wish to maintain their ties with Hackney can do so and in fact more low cost housing will be available in the area than is now the case.

Not only will there be Housing Trust rental accommodation similar to that provided elsewhere for workers' families, but in the private development there will be bed-sitting room and one bedroom apartments. These will be very much cheaper than other high rise developments in Adelaide and will provide further accommodation for low and middle income earners. The Housing Trust, in fact, gives rent rebates in special cases and these would be available to welfare cases in Hackney where necessary.

In South Australia, 2,400 tenants have rent reductions because of welfare problems.

The new scheme will alleviate present traffic problems, and remove non-conforming land users now causing concern to residents such as the C.S.I.R.O. sheep pens.

The Hackney project is only a small scheme in relation to the total problem of urban decay now being felt across Australia.

Only with direct Federal Government assistance can we tackle the problem on the scale necessary.

But, relatively small as it is, the Hackney North scheme shows what can be done to alleviate a serious and growing social problem.